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IF WE HAD BUT A DAY.

We should fill the hour with sweetest things, If we had but a day; We should drink alone at the purest springs In our upward way; We should love with a lifetime's love in an hour, If the hours were few; We should rest, not for dreams, but for fresher power To be and to do. We should guide our wayward or weary wills By the clearest light; We should keep our eyes on the heavenly hills, If they lay in sight; We should trample the pride and the discontent Beneath our feet; We should take whatever a good God sent, With a trust complete. We should waste no moments in weak regret, If the days were but one— If what we remembered and we regret Went out with the sun; We should be from our clamorous selves so free To work or to pray, And be what our Father would have us be, If we had but a day.

THE OLD TREE'S SECRET.

"We will take the house—shall we not, Charlie?" We had gone all over the roomy, old-fashioned house, my little wife and I, from the dusty, cobwebbed garret to the neglected cellars, and we now stood together at the back of the garden, critically surveying its appearance. It was a low two-story house, built in the shape of a T, with a cluster of tall chimneys in the middle and the three gables hidden in ivy. It had once stood quite out of the town, which had since gradually crept toward it, until what had been a road was now become a street of straggling cottages and villas, extending to the high wall inclosing the grounds. The lawn was shaded with old trees, and the garden choked up with thickets of lilac and snowball. The old lady, Mrs. Gage, who had for forty years resided here, leading a very secluded and invalid life, had taken no pains to keep the place in order, and she and the property had decayed together, until recently she had died, and the house was for sale. "It looks dreadfully gloomy and neglected," said Cecie, gazing up at the back windows. "Mrs. Moss, next door, says that for twenty years no one has occupied those upper rooms; and see how the ivy has bound together those shutters on the left. But it is a beautiful old house, and I know that we can make it bright and cheerful. And then the garden—what a delight it will be to the children, and to ourselves, too. We will take it, won't we, Charlie?" There was no resisting her pleading, coaxing manner. So that very evening I went to see the agent, and before the week had elapsed the house was ours. With what zeal and enjoyment we entered upon the transformation of our new abode. The masses of ivy were torn down from the gables or judiciously trimmed; every door and window was thrown wide to the fresh air and sunlight; and paint and paper, muslin curtains, and bright carpets and India matting made the house delightful to behold. This much accomplished, we turned our attention to the garden. It was already June, and the season too advanced for much improvement; but we pulled down the rotted arbors, thinned out the thickets of roses and lilacs, and I caused a little round table and some rustic garden seats to be placed under an old tree at the further end of the central walk. Here, on returning from my office on the warm, sunny evenings, we would sit—Cecie engaged with some light stitching, and I with cigar, books and papers, reading to her, while our little ones ran wild up and down the garden walks. "This is thoroughly delightful," I remarked, one evening. "How is it, Cecie, that we have managed to live eight years of housekeeping life without a garden?" "Yes," she answered, radiantly, "it is delightful. Living so much in the open air seems to take a new and fresh growth, like the flowers. Only— and here she glanced uneasily around—"Only, Charlie, I think—I fancy—that this is not exactly the spot for our al fresco boudoir." "Why not? It faces the walk, it commands a view of the house and the whole garden. And these branches hanging so low and clothed in ivy, make a nice canopy above us. What is it that you object to?" "I scarcely know. But somehow I have never liked this tree." It was a very old tree under which we sat, with a huge gnarled trunk growing in a sloping position near the garden wall, and covered with ivy. About eight feet from the ground the trunk separated into three branches, and here the ivy had matted itself in an impervious mass, concealing the decayed branches with the exception of the extremities, which here and there protruded from the green mass, white and bare. "They look like skeleton fingers," said Cecie, glancing up, "and it gives me the horrors. I think the tree ought to be cut down. It always reminds me of a graveyard or a haunted house." I did not at the time pay much attention to her remarks. But some days after she again suggested that our garden table and chairs should be removed to some other spot. "I don't know why it is," she said, uneasily, "but I always feel nervous here. I fancy there is something peculiar about the place—in the rustling of the ivy and in the very atmosphere; I often find myself starting and looking

around with a vague sense of something horrible. I hate the sight of that tree, with its distorted shape and bare skeleton arms." I rallied her upon being fanciful, but promised that the "skeleton arms" of which she complained should be cut off. She sat silent for a moment, then said, seriously: "Charlie, did it ever occur to you that certain objects in nature—trees, for instance—may have an individual life of their own? I don't mean the mere vegetable life, but a sort of mysterious spiritual existence. Now, I can't help fancying that this tree is conscious of what is going on beneath it—that it remembers things which it has witnessed in its long life, and, were it able, could tell us some horrible ghastly story of the past. You may laugh, but I assure you that I never sit under this tree, even on a sunny noonday, without feeling a chill creeping over me, and a sense of something mysterious and horrible, which makes me almost afraid." "Of course," I said; "having once imagined that the dead branches resemble 'skeleton arms,' and associated them in your own mind with the idea of a graveyard, you will be haunted with all sorts of dismal thoughts and fancies in connection with the tree. But since you don't like it, Cecie, I will have this bugbear removed, and we will build a pretty summer-house on the spot. I will speak to the men to-morrow, when they come to take down the wall." The portion of the wall to which I alluded separated our garden from that of our next door neighbor. It was of stone, but the mortar had fallen out and left it little more than a pile of loose stones, which I feared might at any moment topple down on the children, as they played about it. So I concluded to have it pulled down, and a light wooden paling placed in its stead. Over there, in the next house, lived an old gentleman and his wife, who passed much of their time in their garden, cultivating flowers and small garden fruits, in which they appeared to take great delight. They had called on us, a cheerful and kindly old couple; and when the old wall was pulled down and before the new one was up, the way lay open to a more familiar intercourse. One evening, by their invitation, we stepped over into their garden to see a collection of roses upon which Mr. Warren prided himself. These duly admired, the old lady expressed to Cecie her pleasure in having neighbors who were neighbors. She had lived ten years in their present abode, and at that time had only twice seen Mrs. Gage! "She wasn't always such a recluse," said the good lady. "I remember that when she and her husband first came here, a young married couple (I was a child then), they were merry, gay and fond of society. It was their daughter's fate which so sadly changed them. You have heard the story?" We had not been long in this town, yet Cecie remembered to have heard something about a daughter of Mrs. Gage running away to join a lover at a distance, and being never afterward heard of. "Her name was Emily," said Mrs. Warren, "and she was the handsomest girl in the town. She was an only child, and had been all her life petted and indulged, and allowed to have her own way. Such children don't generally turn out as well as they should do; and Emily Gage rejected many good offers, to fall in love with a handsome and dissipated fellow, who made his appearance here for a short time. Being unable to give a satisfactory account of himself, Mr. Gage forbade his visiting his daughter, and the two then agreed upon an elopement. This was put a stop to, and the young man shortly afterward left the place. The girl, however, was closely watched, the parents having cause to suspect that she was in secret correspondence with him. And one morning she was nowhere to be found—only a note slipped under the door of her parents' sleeping-room informed them that she had gone to join her lover—that she had taken with her all her jewelry together with five hundred dollars, which her father had left in his writing-desk; since she would need money for traveling and other expenses. And that was the last that they ever knew about her." "But could they not find the young man?" asked Cecie. "They found him, after a long search, but he denied all knowledge of Emily and her intended flight. They had corresponded, and she had assured him that she would yet find means to join him, but her letters had then ceased, nor had he ever since heard from her. This was his story. Some believed it, but others, though nothing could ever be proven against him, had dark suspicions of him. And the strangest thing was, that, having once passed the garden wall, every trace of the girl was utterly lost." "The garden wall?" "I forgot to mention that it was in that manner she escaped. She mounted the sloping trunk of the old tree at the foot of the garden walk—the same under which you so often sit—and then stepped along its horizontal branches to the top of the wall. This was rendered evident by the broken twigs and scattered leaves at the foot of the tree. On the ground outside the wall was found her shawl, which she had doubtless dropped or forgotten in her haste. That was all. To this day the mystery of her fate remains unrevealed, though undoubtedly there was foul play somewhere. The jewels and the money were great temptations to crime." "That evening my wife said to me: 'That horrible tree, Charlie! Did I tell you that it had a secret to reveal? Perhaps it knows what became of that poor girl.'" Next day Cecie went on a visit of a few days to her mother, taking the children with her. Before going to my

business I gave orders respecting the tree. I wished every trace of it to be removed before her return, when perhaps she would forget all about it and its gloomy associations. Returning home in the evening, I was met by the workmen with countenance of interest and mystery. Their information startled me. While busied in cutting down the tree, they had heard something rattle and fall within; and on examination discovered within the bones of a skeleton, though whether human or not they could not tell. Communicating the fact to Mr. Warren, who was in his garden, they had by his advice desisted until my arrival. I went to the spot, and with the men and Mr. Warren examined the tree. Though the opening already made the bones were clearly to be distinguished; and I directed that the trunk should at once be felled. When this was done there was exposed a hollow stump, in which lay a mass of human bones, with remains of a woman's dress; and beneath these and the decayed wood and dust which had gathered over them gleamed the lustre of jewels and gold and silver coin. I looked at Mr. Warren, who, white as death, had staggered to a garden bench. "My God!" he exclaimed. "It is—Emily!" Yes, it was Emily. Of this there could be no doubt. The tree had long held its fearful secret, and was still unable to reveal it. It had given up Emily's skeleton, but how came the poor girl to be immured within this living tomb? Further examination, however, revealed the whole horrible truth. "I see how it all was," my old neighbor said, in a broken and faltering voice. "She had thrown her shawl over the wall that it might not be in her way, and then mounted the tree to where the three great branches meet; and there, hidden by the masses of ivy, lay the fatal trap. Through that great hole she slipped, and the ivy closed over her in her living tomb." He shuddered, and the tears gushed into his eyes. We neither of us expressed the thoughts which chilled and moved our hearts to pitying horror. Had her death been sudden, or had she here slowly starved and pined to death? Her cries could not have been heard, for the house stood apart, and her parents had left home and gone in pursuit of her. I thought of Cecie's strange fancy concerning the old tree, and lost myself in vague conjectures as to the nature of those mysterious influences which sometimes affect our human perceptions, how or whence we may not know. This was the secret which the old tree so long held. And I may add that to this day Cecie knows nothing of it; for, beside the clergyman who gave Christian burial to the remains of the poor girl, no one but ourselves, who made the discovery, ever knew the secret. We thought it best that it should be so. But I observed that Cecie never after complained of the uneasy influence which had before so annoyed her. With the removal of the tree and the burial of the bones, nature resumed her bright and joyous way in the old garden.—Susan A. Weiss.

MOMENTS FOR MERRIMENT.

STORIES THAT WILL DRIVE DULL CARE AWAY. No Great Loss—Over the Fence—Hired Help—Too Tough—New Cent and a Quarter Pieces. A gentleman bought a newspaper and tendered in payment a piece of forty sous. The newspaper woman—"I haven't the change; you can pay me as you pass along to-morrow." The gentleman—"But suppose I should be killed to-day?" The newspaper woman—"Oh, it wouldn't be a very great loss!"—Paris Wk. Over the Fence. Mrs. Shingon put her head over the fence and thus addressed her neighbor, who was hanging out her week's washing: "A family has moved in the empty house across the way, Mrs. Clothes-line." "Yes, I know." "Did you notice their furniture?" "Not particularly." "Two loads, and I wouldn't give a dollar a load for it. Carpets! I wouldn't put them down in my kitchen. And the children! I won't allow mine to associate with them. And the mother! She looks as though she had never known a day's happiness. The father drinks, I expect. Too bad that such people should come into this neighborhood. I wonder who they are." "I know them." "Do you? Well, I declare. Who are they?" "The mother is my sister, and the father is superintendent of the Methodist Sunday-school." A painful pause ensues. Hired Help. Mrs. Jooblewizzle had hired a new and a very green errand boy, and she sent him with a basket and the money to get some groceries. When he came back he did not report, and she called downstairs to him: "John, did you get the cabbage?" "That's wot you tole me to git," he answered, with a lazy drawl. "Did you get the potatoes?" "That's wot you tole me to git." "Did you get the starch?" "That's wot you tole me to git." "Did you get the soap?" "That's wot you tole me to git." "Did you get the sugar?" "That's wot you tole me to git." "I know that," she shrieked, after the same monotonous reply floated up to her for the fifth time, "but did you get them?" "No, ma'am, I lost the money, and some dang thief 'er boy stole the basket." Merchant-Traveler. New Cent and a Quarter Pieces. Scene—Park Row. Dramatis Personae—A bootblack and newsboy. Bootblack (with great unction)—Say, chummy, did you see any of the new cent and a quarter pieces? Newsboy (with vehement surprise)—See what? Bootblack (with great deliberation)—See any of the new cent and a quarter pieces. Newsboy (with evident sympathy)—Been out all night? Bootblack (with fervid anger)—No, I ain't been out all night. I'll bet you a banana I can show you one of the cent and a quarter pieces. Newsboy (with lofty scorn)—I don't want no banana, but I'll buy a whole bunch for you if you show me the cent and a quarter. There was a wicked look on the bootblack's face as he went down in his pocket. Then he retreated a step or two and took out a cent and a quarter of a dollar. "There's the cent and a quarter pieces," he said as he sloped away, "and I'll take the banana some other time."—New York American Queen. Too Tough. Late one evening recently a New York goat of the William persuasion and tender years, though robust stomach, returned to the bosom of the family with an expression of pain upon his countenance and a suspicious contortion about the stomach. "Oh, my son," said the grave and reverend sire, "you are ailing—you have eaten something indigestible. What is it?" "I know not, father," returned young William. "All I have lunched on this evening was a few circus posters on a bill board around the corner." "It is as I thought, my son," wisely nodded the old stager. "You have swallowed one or two of those stories concerning the white elephant. I saw them myself, my son, and decided not to go them. They looked too tough for even my muscular gastric juice. But here is a choice assortment of tins cans and old shoes. Eat a few of these and by the time they mix with the circus bill in your stomach I think the kinks will be pretty effectually removed. You cannot be too careful about eating what you find on the bill boards these times."—Bizarre. A Too Willing Young Man. "Do you love me as dearly as men have ever loved women?" said Mabel, finding an easy anchorage for her cheek about the latitude of his upper vest pocket and the longitude of his left suspender. "More," said George, with waving enthusiasm, for this was about the two hundred and fourteenth encore to which he had responded since 8 o'clock. "More, far more dearly. Oh, ever so much more." "Would you," she went on, and there was a tremulous impressiveness in her voice that warned the young man that

the star was going to leave her lines and spring something new on the house!—"would you be willing to work and wait for me, as Rachel waited at the well, seven long years?" "Seven!" he cried, in a burst of genuine devotion. "Seven! Aye, gladly! Yes, and more! Even until seventy times seven! Let's make it seventy, anyhow, and prove my devotion." Somehow or other he was alone when he left the parlor a few minutes later, and it looks now as though he would have to wait about 700 years before he saves fuel by toasting his shins at the low-down grate in the parlor again. There are men, my son, who always overdo the thing; they want to be meeker than Moses, stronger than Sampson and ten times more particular than Job, the printer; that is, he isn't, but he used to be.—Hawkeye. Fish That Go Ashore. An old fisherman took a scientific reporter of the New York Sun to a pool on Long Island, where they found numerous little fishes (killies) resting partly out of water, with their heads high and dry upon blades of grass. The old man also spun a yarn about some large fishes that he had seen hopping along on the banks of a river in the Malay country. These fishes were recognized from the fisherman's description by the man of science, who then took his turn at telling fish stories as follows: "The fish is only one of a dozen or twenty that are more or less amphibious. When the Ceradotus is under water it breathes by the gills, but it has a habit of leaving the water and prowling around on the marshes of the Mary river. As soon as it leaves the water the gas in the air bladder is expelled with a noise that can be heard half a mile. The fish takes in air at the mouth or nostril that passes into the air bladder, to which the heart is now pumping blood to be purified, instead of sending it to the gills. "The Ceradotus, which may be called a dry land fish, is over six feet long, and looks like a great eel with two pairs of fins that compare with feet, and the most curious part of it is that previous to 1870 the fish was unknown, except as a fossil. These fossils were described years ago by Professor Owen as the Ceradotus. Strange stories came from the Mary river of loud noises that were heard in the swamps at night, and the crushing and rushing as of some huge animal. At last these rumors attracted the attention of a naturalist, who went to the locality, and the discovery of the fish was the result. They live on leaves and vegetable matter that they obtain partly out of water, and they are the last of a powerful race that is probably doomed to extinction. "The killies are not the only fishes that leave the water. Last year I spent some weeks near a small fishing village where there was a large eel pond, and to say that it was alive with these animals is putting it extremely mild. Some authorities say that the eel goes down to the sea only once a year, but these fellows went out to sea every night, completely filling the little channel so that in wading across you stepped on hundreds that writhed about your feet and legs. If there happened to be a dory or other boat about that blocked the way, the eels left the water and wriggled away over land, presenting a curious sight, and moving with such rapidity that it was an impossibility to catch them. I thought it might be accidental, and inquired of the fisherman how it was, and one told me that several years before the entrance to the pond became clogged by sand after a storm, and the eels, finding no way of getting out, started across the sand every night, forming passageways by which they returned. "In England, when a pike pond gets too low to suit its occupants, they, according to Couch, start overland in regular droves, and travel until they reach some place better suited to their requirements. This is true of a large number of fishes that are peculiar to the East and to South America. In the latter country the catfishes known Doras and Hussars, when left in drying pools, travel overland in droves, and are caught in great numbers by birds and various animals as well as men. Fishes of another genera, from North America, have been found far from water. Perhaps the most curious is the Protopterus, some being found in Africa as well. They also breathe by the air bladder when deprived of water, but instead of migrating overland they descend into the mud and encase themselves into a ball, the interior of which is lined with a slimy secretion, and thus closed up, as it were, they lie until the rainy season comes again, and they are soaked out. In certain parts of Africa barren wastes have suddenly become flooded, and the sudden appearance of fishes has given rise to ideas of spontaneous generation, as the enormous quantities of fishes could not be explained on any other hypothesis unless they had rained down. Daidorf, the Danish naturalist, caught an anatas, a perch like fish climbing a palm, working its way up by its sharp fins. Hence, these fish are called climbing perch. They don't climb usually, but they are perfectly amphibious, like a frog. "As a matter of course, these fishes have been experimented upon. An English naturalist put a blenny in an aquarium, and at certain times noticed that the fish tried to jump out of water. To see what it would do, he set a stone in the water that formed a little island, and in a moment the blenny jumped upon it, high and dry out of water. The experimenter noticed that it was then low tide on the beach, and every day at exactly low tide the fish jumped out upon the rock, and returned to the water at flood tide. It is remarkable that the fish should leave the water, but how much more so that it should in a house and tank know the turn of the tide." A chauts acquaintance—as introduction to a pretty member of the choir.—Hartford Journal.

THE DEFENDER.

Care came and laid his hand upon her shoulder, And sorrow came, her lids with salt tears wet; And Pain, with features marred, and white and set, Pressed to her side; and then, stern-visaged, gaunt, Frightening her shaken soul, unpitying Woe Stared in her face; and then, growing bolder By all these ills, Temptation, smiling, fair, Spread for her weary feet a charmed snare, With tender, cruel hand. So cold the world; All her weak soul in a strange tempest whirled, With whitened lips, and sad, imploring breath, She stretches out her helpless hand to Death. Then lo! one came, before whose radiant grace Sorrow grew dumb, and grim Care hid his face; Before whose presence as radiant as the day, Temptation, vexed and beaten, fled away; For whose dear sake she trembled at the thought Of Death, whose pallid kiss she vain had sought. With a strange rapture, holy, restful, sweet Against her own she felt a true heart beat. Oh, Life! she cried, no ill of thine can hold me, Since Love, the mighty, in his arms doth fold me. —Charlotte Perry, in Vanity Fair.

HUMOR OF THE DAY.

The most courted belle—The dinner bell. The Egyptian injunction—"Mummy's the word." The hen that thinks a woman throws shoes at her for good luck is very much mistaken.—Bradford Mail. Hospitality. "Do take some more of the vegetables, Mr. Blood, for they go to the pigs anyway."—Harvard Lampoon. "Another expedition to the pole," said the man, as he wended his way to his barber shop.—Cincinnati Saturday Night. "Yes," she said, "I always obey my husband, but I reckon I have something to say about what his commands shall be."—Boston Post. My love and I for kisses played And it did chance to be The darling girl won all the stakes— And gave them all to me. —Salem Sunbeam. The garden season is here, and the husband of the woman who throws stones at the hens is getting himself into a position to dodge.—Bradford Sunday Mail. Lady, to small boy with a dog—Johnny, does that dog bark at night? Johnny, who is a connoisseur in dogs—No, ma'am, he barks at cats and other dogs.—Merchant-Traveler. Now is the time when the small boy in the country comes into the house with his hair all wet and tells his mother that he ran home from school so fast that he is all perspired.—Boston Post. The price of Circassian girls has lately dropped to \$600—the lowest figure ever known. All young men who have been despising matrimony because wives are so cheap can now purchase one for about a year's salary, and be happy.—Burlington Free Press. "I don't think I'm cranky," said a dundish young fellow, "but when I go out with my dog, and hear a man whistle and I look around, and he says he was whistling at the old dog and not the puppy, I think it is time I was asserting my rights."—Merchant-Traveler. "In Siberia you can purchase a wife for eight dollars." As long as girls can be had for the asking in this country, very few of our young men will go to Siberia to procure a wife. And one who has seen a Siberian wife will wonder why they come so terribly high.—Norristown Herald. It is said that as late as the latter part of the thirteenth century, "the upper classes in Europe ate whales for dinner." It is not stated, but we should think one whale would not only make a dinner for the largest family in Europe, but there would be enough left over to warm up for next morning's breakfast.—Norristown Herald. A messenger boy recently fell off the roof of a very high building up town, but was not hurt at all. It seems when he fell he was asleep, and the slowness which characterizes him when on life and death errands didn't desert him. In fact he dropped to the ground so slowly and softly, that when he landed he was not awakened, but went right on dreaming until a policeman aroused him.—Puck. The Elevator. A person that first put an elevator into a high structure, so as to save passengers the labor of walking up many steps of stairs, little dreamed of the important results that have followed the adoption of that expedient. It has practically revolutionized the domestic and business architecture of large cities. In New York there are literally hundreds of high buildings accommodating thousands of persons, although the apartment and office buildings are a thing of yesterday. In this city there are scores of dwellings between 140 and 160 feet in height. One house is over 180 feet high. The lower part of New York has a number of enormous structures filled with offices luxuriously furnished. The occupants of the upper floors prefer them to those nearer the surface of the earth. The air, they think, is purer, and there are fewer annoyances, while the elevator is a swift and pleasant means of communication.—Democrat.